



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Response to Early Language Skills in Nurseries

Thank you for contacting me about early language skills.

I appreciate your concern over this very important issue. I recognise the importance of making sure all children have access to quality early education, and the Government is equally committed to improving the quality of early education.

The Early Years Foundation Stage sets the standards for the provision of learning, development and care for children from birth to age five that all registered early years providers must follow. It requires settings to deliver high quality early education and includes a focus on communication and language. It makes clear that children should be developing the English language skills necessary to ensure they are ready to benefit from the opportunities available to them when they begin Year 1.

I do think it is important to recognise that the quality of the workforce is already good, and has been improving, with 87 per cent of staff in full day care settings now qualified to Level 3. The introduction of Early Years Teachers is also welcome, especially as they are expected to meet the same entry qualifications as for older children. I know that Ministers want to continue to attract quality staff into the early years, and to support those already working in the sector, which is why I am pleased they will be reviewing career progression routes this year. Ministers want to know what improvements can be made to help more staff reach their potential and forge a successful career.

All children, regardless of their starting point, should have access to high quality early education and childcare. To help close the gap between disadvantaged children and their better off peers, the Government introduced the Early Learning Programme for two-year-olds in September 2013. Around 160,000 of our most disadvantaged two-year-olds are already benefiting, and the Early Years Pupil Premium has also been introduced, worth £50 million a year.

I hope this information has been useful, and thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Kind regards,

Edward Timpson MP

EDWARD TIMPSON

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR CREWE & NANTWICH

30 VICTORIA STREET, CREWE CW1 2JE

www.edwardtimpson.com | 01270 501 725